SOME THINGS OF INTEREST STILL ON IN THE LOCAL PLAYHOUSES

Actress in Fiction.

An Altogether Different Creature From the Real Woman—Authors Have Strangely Conjured Up Impossible Personalities.

Since George Eliot disgusted Carlyle by making her journeyman carpenter in "Adam Bede" put in the panels of his door after the frame was finished, pictures of callings and professions in fiction have seldom given complete satisfaction. The "arts" suffer especially in this way. The fact is, says a writer in the Chicago Record-Herald, the most elevated art is principally composed of hard work and devotion to it as a beloved trade; and the greatest artists have no histories. The late Wilson Barrett did once, indeed, endeavor to throw glamour over his career as an actor by a statement that at a date several years previous to a certain speech from the stage he had stood outside the "sixpenny gallery" of the Princess' Theater and had vowed to act Hamlet in that house some day or other.

But, as a rule, the career of the artist is chiefly composed of unconscious, industrious perseverance; and he never looks back upon it as romantic or fit for publication in the form of fiction. Most of our professional readers must have enjoyed a quiet smile now and then at the depictions of their sayings and doings as reported in contemporary novels. Even so clever a writer as John Oliver Hobbes has not shrunk from attempting the impossible, and in "A Study in Temptations" has given an extraordinary picture of a leading London actress. She is a delightful personage, though "not a bit like" any actress we ever heard of. In figure she is "tall and gracious," though her hips have not "jut" enough to please everyone. She is staying down in the country with one Lady Hyde-Bassett, and, strange to say, she is secretly married to a royal academician named Wrath. She reads Hegel, and, indeed, "everything," and she is "the new Lady Macbeth."

This is how she talks: "You must know," she says to a young man named Mauden, who starts an intellectual flirtation with her, ignorant of her being married, "that I came out to gather honeysuckle this afternoon, because I wanted to see whether I would be happier if I were more like the primitive woman. I have been so bored; I longed to be at home reading Hardy, or St. Augustine, or Hegel." Occasionally we get glimpses of her profession. "The polite world," it is stated, "does its best to make her think that her readings are the result of laborious thought." "She found it humiliating to reflect that she had so very little to do with her own ability." "She had served her dreary apprenticeship with the rest." This is all we are told, except that "she had great talents."

Not to put it too finely, Mrs. Wrath is a charming simpleton—not to say a goose. She analyzes and philosophizes remarkably. "How," she inquires of the young man who is making love to her, "should one begin if one wished to rebel against existing low standards of morality?" Eventually she arranges to run away with Mauden; and this is the letter she writes to her husband before leaving on an expedition which turns out a complete fiasco: "I have discovered a new meaning in life and duty. * * * Subjectivity is fatal to art; all great art is objective. And love is subjectivity in its lowest phase. I use these philosophical terms because they are convenient, and because they are sufficiently comprehensive to cover all subtle—and perhaps agonizing—distinctions." As we have indicated, she does not really run away with the young man; but catches cold, has a serious illness, confesses all to the academician, and is forgiven.

What we remark in all this is the extraordinary absence of "shop." Association with painters, sculptors and every class of artists has convinced us of an infallible rule—any of them that are "worth their salt"—that have "great talents" and have "gone through the mill"—always talk "shop" when at liberty. The only real recipe for success is to have one's mind always concerned in one's especial business, and, though actors and actresses have too much sense and tact to talk "shop" in general in society, they invariably talk about their art and think about it when at ease, as Sophia is represented as being at Lady Hyde-Bassett's. Such an extraordinary absence of interest in her profession, combined with an equally remarkable concentration of her mind on her psychological condition, we never heard of as existing in any actress.

What is Sophia doing down in the country? Presumably she is "resting." But when a leading actress rests from acting she does not rest from thinking about her profession. And we would lay a heavy wager that if a gramophonic record were taken of a flirtation similar to that between Mauden and Sophia Jenyns in "A Study in Temptations," there would be a great deal more discussion of her successes and failures in the past, a great many more hopes and fears expressed, and more of her plans for greater achievements in the future than there would be allusions to Hegel, St. Augustine, or "the existing low standards of morality."

After all, however innocent one may be naturally, one cannot "serve an apprenticeship of dreary drudgery" in a profession without acquiring some amount of knowledge of men and things—some general "gumption." It may be that there are penetralia of dramatic society of which we have no cognizance; realms in which leading tragediennes stay down in the country married to royal academicians "on the quiet," talk about objectivity and subjectivity, read Hegel and St. Augustine, and analyze their sweet souls. When Thackeray drew his Fotheringay, and was reproached with caricature, he was able to point to a contemporary actress who justified the portrait in "Pendennis." And so perhaps John Oliver Hobbes' Sophia may exist in real life. Of one thing, however, we feel certain. She has not great talents, and cannot hold the position suggested by the phrase "the new Lady Macbeth." It is only amateurs who observe themselves so elaborately. Artists have their hands full observing other people.

"The Butterflies."

Henry Guy Carleton's Play by the Columbia Stock Company.

Tomorrow night the popular Columbit Theater company begins the eighth week of this, the most successful summer season ever known in this city. Another standard play, and one that was a great success in its day, has been chosen for this week and all the members will be given splendid opportunity to display their versatility. The play selected is Henry Guy Carleton's "The Butterflies," which was presented in this city some years ago by John Drew and Maude Adams. It is described as an American comedy and is written in three acts. It is replete with bright sayings and clever situations and is sure to please the patrons of the Columbia.

The part of Frederick Ossian, which was played in the original production by Mr. Drew, will be enacted here by Guy Standing, and Miss Charlotte Walker will play the role originally given by Miss Adams. Miss Galloway will have an important part, as will also some of the other favorites, including Mr. Duncan, Mr. Gaston, Miss Hammer, Miss Hammack, and Mr. Hards.

The scenic investiture will be complete and the production will, in every way, bear comparison with the original.

Ellen Terry's Premiere.

Appeared at Eight Years of Age in "A Winter's Tale."

Ellen Terry made her first appearance on the stage at the age of eight, at the Princess Theater, London. The play was "A Winter's Tale," and the memorable date was Monday, April 28, 1856. Charles Kean was the Leontes. The line of the play bill devoted to the youthful actress read as follows: "Mamillius (his son) Miss Ellen Terry."

The Queen, Prince Albert, and the Princess Royal were all present, and witnessed an incident which caused tears of short-lived grief to be shed by the child actress.

Miss Terry has since described her emotions on that momentous night. "How my young heart," she writes, "swelled with pride—I can recall the sensation now—when I was told what I had to do. There is something, I suppose, in a woman's nature which always makes her recollect how she was dressed at any especially eventful moment of her life, and I can see myself, as though it were yesterday, in my little red and white coat—very short—very pink silk stockings, and a row of tight sausage curls—my mother was always very careful that they should be in perfect order and regularity—clustered round my head.

"A small go-cart, which it was my duty to drag about the stage, was also a keen source of pride and a great trouble to me. My first dramatic failure dates from that go-cart. I was told to run about with it on the stage, and while carrying out my instructions with more vigor than discretion, I tripped over the handle and down I came on my back. A titter ran through the house and I felt that my career as an actress was ruined forever. Bitter and copious were the tears I shed, but I am not sure that the incident has materially altered the course of my life."

Criticism in The Times consoled the actress in these words: "And last—aye, and least, too—Miss Ellen Terry plays the boy Mamillius with a vivacious precocity that proves her a worthy relative of her sister (?) Miss Kate."

Holyoke's Poster Law.

None Save Those Approved by City Sheriff to Be Put Up.

An ordinance recently adopted by the board of aldermen of Holyoke, Mass., may compel some managers to provide a special set of paper for that city hereafter. Penalties are provided for disregard of this ordinance, which follows:

"Section 4—Every such licensee (of amusement enterprises) shall prevent his place of amusement and any performance or exhibition therein from being advertised by means of pictorial posters, placards or show bills which have not been approved by the city marshal, or by some person designated by him. No posters, placards or show bills which are lewd, indecent or vulgar, or which pictorially represent the commission or attempt to commit any crime or bodily violence, shall be exhibited or displayed within the city; nor shall any theatrical exhibition, play or performance be advertised on any poster, placard or show bill within the city, by any name or title which indicates that the exhibition, play or performance portrays, represents, shows, enacts or explains scenes of immorality or the commission of, or attempt to commit, crimes against chastity. The city marshal shall exclude all posters, placards or show bills which violate the above provisions."

Yvette Guilbert.

Famous Concert Hall Singer Intends to Revisit America.

Yvette Guilbert, who is now in London, is telling her friends that she expects to go to America in the autumn. For some months, she says, she has had a conditional arrangement with a manager in New York, and now both are ready to fulfill it. She is not coming back to the music halls. In fact, it is several years since she has appeared in them anywhere. She does not expect to do a little scene of her own in a musical play, though the manager seemed to have something like that in view. Yvette's plan, which she hopes to accomplish—and she has a will—is to give here the same sort of recitals in costume that she has been giving for two or three seasons in London and in Paris.

In them she is no longer the lanky and sad-eyed Yvette of the plain frocks and the long black gloves who used half to sing and half to recite to us. Nowadays she is a very fresh, alert, cheerful, almost comely, person, and she wears on the stage either the brocades, flowered skirts, and white wig of a marquise of Versailles or the swelling crinolines and the short bodice of the Paris of 1830. The furniture and the ornaments about her suit the one or the other costume. If she is in "Pompadour" dress she sings "Pompadour" songs—old tunes of the seventeenth and eighteenth century in France set to verses of the time. If she is in crinoline she sings "crinoline" songs—folk tunes and popular ditties that they were singing eighty years ago in Paris. She has foresworn altogether the sordid woes and joys of the slums of Paris that she twice brought to us. Yvette is cultivating innocence now, simple mirth, and simple sorrow, and little tragedies that are more poignant because they are less sodden.

The tunes are of the simplest, the words of the clearest, and the directest. She half sings and half recites them as she used to do, but her voice since she recovered from her long illness is richer and more vibrant. With it, as before, she makes characters live and speak, pictures scenes, brings the very atmosphere of the place and the hour, distils a whole comedy out of a ditty ten minutes long, or wrings from a few verses the tragedy of two lives. Only it is comedy now that she chooses oftenest, full of archness and coquetry, with just a touch of sadness and mockery underneath. She likes quaint nonsense, too. But she still plays out enough of her little tragedies. Always her features aid her, and now and then a gesture. All the rest is acting with tones, and no one quite matches Yvette in the vividness of it. It is years since we have heard her in New York, and she has ripened and refined in them.

Fitting Out a Company.

What It Costs to Put an Organization Out on the Road.

Not less than four hundred theatrical companies are organized and sent out from New York at the beginning of each season. Many of these companies open their tours in August, and that means that the preliminary work is now already under way, and that in a month from now things will be seething in theatrical circles. Outwardly the theaters up and down Broadway are closed, but within each one it is probable that in another week or two a hundred people or more will be rehearsing in relays. Every available public hall within a mile of Long Acre square will boast of its group of Thespians, and from early morning until toward midnight the atmosphere will be charged with dramatic electricity.

To rehearse, fit out, and start four hundred theatrical companies involves a great deal of work and much expense. Few organizations go out now with a working force of less than twenty-five persons; the majority of them will have nearly double that number of names on the payroll. To costume this great number of people is in itself a business of magnitude; but besides the costuming must be reckoned the scenery and properties. For most of the larger productions preparations have been going on for three months, and in the case of some of the exceptionally elaborate enterprises work on the production is begun a full year before the opening night. Thus there is scarcely any "slack time" for the scene painters, and little for the manufacturers of costumes, and these two branches of the business profit as much by failures as by successes.

Almost every detail of a theatrical production is wholly taken care of in New York. The one notable exception is the printing. There are several large establishments in the city whose entire plants are devoted to theatrical work, but some of the most extensive establishments in the country are located out of town. Buffalo, Detroit, Cincinnati, and Chicago have enormous capital invested in this line of work, and there are several also in some of the smaller towns. These places all have branch offices in the theatrical district, however, and most of the orders are booked in New York.

Such seemingly minor details as photographs, trunks, traveling bags, etc., in the aggregate represent a heavy outlay. The half dozen theatrical photographers in New York, however, are supplemented by a score of others in various cities who make a specialty of posing stage subjects. Nevertheless, there is an enormous business done in the city by the men who make a business of catering to the needs of the stage, and it would be safe to estimate this particular item as amounting to pretty nearly $200,000 a year, for it is no secret that the Thespian is extremely generous in the matter of photographs. Without exaggerating in the least, the average total expense of fitting out each of these 400 companies may be estimated at $2,500. Thus we have a grand total of $1,000,000, which is spent before a single dollar is taken in, for the reason that the line of credit is comparatively small. A very small proportion of the road offerings are unsuccessful, and the company is disbanded, but the capital has been invested, and little of that which it has bought is again available.

Dressing Room.

Homes Behind the Scenes Where Personality of Actress Reveals Itself.

There is a home behind the scenes in which the actress spends much of her professional life—the dressing room, her "professional home," it might be called. Here she changes her personality so far as outward appearance is concerned, to suit the character she is to interpret. Its door closes upon her, opens to let out some one else. Julia Marlowe goes in, out comes Juliet! Disappears Mrs. Leslie Carter, reappears Adrea! Flits in Maude Adams, flits out Lady Babble! The wizard has waved his wand, the rouge tipped hare's foot, and, presto! change! 'Tis all part of the great mystery of "behind the scenes," between which and the spectator the footlights form a barrier of fire. It would scorch him if he dared attempt to break through. Only the "lines," the personal magnetism of the actress and the "atmosphere," of the play (if it is lucky enough to have "atmosphere") can cross it, and always from one direction only, from stage to audience.

Probably no actress on the American stage is as well aware of the changes that have taken place in dressing rooms as Mrs. W. G. Jones, the Nanny of "The Little Minister;" the Nurse of "Romeo and Juliet," and probably the most legitimate successor of the late Mrs. Gilbert as the "Grand Old Woman of the Stage."

In 1837, before her marriage, she was a member of a stock company in Philadelphia playing at one of the leading theaters there. The dressing rooms were small, stuffy affairs, without ventilation except over the transoms, the walls and floors bare. In those days the call boy did not go to the dressing rooms, knock on the doors and call the actress by name when it was time for her to go on the stage, but every member of the company was known by a number, and he simply would sing out "Number ——!"

Mrs. Jones was married from the theater in which she was then playing, and after she left the company it was forty years before she returned to that house. When she went back, after that long lapse of time, she did not find the slightest improvement. Forty years had passed, yet the dressing rooms were still bare, without running water and without ventilation to the open air. Really it is only during the last ten years that any genuine improvement has taken place in the dressing rooms throughout the country.

Now it has become worth while for an actress who is high enough up in the profession to play fairly long engagements to take hangings and ornaments along with her in order to give a homelike appearance to her dressing room. Some of the "old timers," however, cannot be persuaded to do this because there is a superstition among them that if you fit up your dressing room prettily you will not remain in it long enough to enjoy its homelike atmosphere—that the piece in which you are playing will not be a success, and the engagement will be shortened.

Mrs. Fiske probably is the only player in this country who is fortunate enough to have a dressing room exclusively for her own use. At her New York theater, the Manhattan, the room, or rather rooms, reserved for her are never occupied by anyone else. When she is away from town on tour the rooms are locked and remain unoccupied until her return.

The rooms combine the artistic and the practical. Besides their primary purpose, they serve also as an office, where Mrs. Fiske dictates her letters and transacts the round of business matters that comes before her. In addition, therefore, to the dressing table, mirrors, make-up conveniences and other appurtenances that are part of every dressing room, Mrs. Fiske has a desk, whose pigeonholes are filled with manuscripts and papers, a letter file and a desk telephone—all factors in the busy work day of a woman who is not only an actress, but also a stage manager and in direct personal charge of her productions.

Show Girl's Latest Fad.

Diamond Earrings for Her Little French Poodle.

The spectacle of a chorus girl investing in jewelry for her dog is as unusual as it is comic. Joan Brookman, a show girl appearing in "Fantana" at the Lyric Theater, New York city, has been for years buying trinkets, not for herself, but for her tiny French poodle Blix. The ornaments which adorn the little animal represent a sum something like twenty times his own value.

Blix's chief ornament is a pair of solitaire earrings, which his mistress has placed in holes pierced in his long ears. "The stones are not of the first water," she said when she displayed the dog to some newspaper men. "Both jewels cost only $60." Notwithstanding this assertion, the gems are clear and fairly large, both being set in gold. They are placed near the top of the dog's ears, and are concealed more than half of the time by his long hair. His only other ornament at present is a blood-stone ring, which has been slipped over his forefoot. Miss Brookman says this ring cost $18. "I had to have it made to order," she explains, "because I could not find a circle large enough to go over the dog's paw."

Miss Brookman hopes in the near future to be able to purchase a gold chain for Blix's throat. She expects to pay $100 for this. She says it is nothing whatever unusual or absurd in decking a dog out in this extraordinary fashion. "I do not care for gems for myself," she said, "and I do care for Blix. If it pleases me to see him wear jewelry, I do not see why anyone should object. I have no one on whom to spend my earnings except the dog, and I am quite satisfied that he should profit by them. After all, it is not any more remarkable to put earrings on a dog than to put an expensive collar around his neck."

The Fall of Nero.

Stephen Phillips Writing a New Play for Beerbohm Tree.

Stephen Phillips, "the greatest English dramatic poet since Shakespeare," as some of his admirers like to call him, is writing a play detailing the decadence of Rome and the fall of Nero, which Beerbohm Tree will play.

Mr. Phillips' view of Nero, who is the chief figure of the new play, is that the Roman Emperor was simply a decadent. Amplifying his definition, Mr. Phillips says that the dominant factor in Nero's personality was his artistry—artistry run mad, if one will, but still artistry. Mr. Phillips speaks by the card and supports his view by the last words ever uttered by this tyrant: "What an artist dies in me!" This phrase, of course, is historical.

Opening his play in the time of Nero's youth, the dramatist presents the young Emperor as a lad of nineteen, under the iron heel of Agrippina, his mother. Tired of her yoke and tortured by the taunts of his courtiers, Nero is then shown by Mr. Phillips planning his mother's death in the leaky tub in which she put to sea. Agrippina, learning of the treachery, makes a waiting woman take her place and swims to shore. But Nero means to rid himself of her, and in the next act we see Agrippina in her palace visited by the assassins. This act closes with the outburst, also historical, of the outraged woman, calling upon her murderers to kill the woman who gave birth to such a monster.

Probably the play will end thus: Nero, pursued by his enemies, takes refuge in the little villa of Phoan the freedman, beyond the Nomentana gate. Run to earth, he falls on his knife, expiring as he utters the famous words which sound the "note" of the whole play, "What an artist dies in me!" Such is the outline of Mr. Phillips' work, which will be an attempt to revive the picture of decadent Rome—its Emperor an artist-megalomaniac, its Augustuses world weary degenerates forever feeding their morbid appetites for sensations.

Miss Robson and Shaw.

An intimate friend of an intimate friend of Eleanor Robson has whispered that George Bernard Shaw is one of that young star's enthusiasms, and that the gibing Irishman, who is writing a play for her in which she will be a kind of Commander Eva Booth and Belle of New York, with a strong injection of Shaw ginger, displays that which resembles enthusiasm about Miss Robson.

One of her closely guarded treasures is a series of three strangely executed sketches of Shaw by himself. They are labeled in his handwriting:

"This"—a spruce drawing of a fairly handsome man in a fairly companionable humor—"was I before I met you."

"This"—showing an astounded man with lower maxillary dropped in amazement of admiration—"is myself when I met you."

"This"—a crestfallen, deeply humble, but wistful individual with the Shaw features and the Shaw ripe wheat beard—"is the way I have looked since you went away."

Burton and the Bartender.

William E. Burton was once playing an engagement in the town of Napoleon, on the Mississippi river. The Inhabitants had evidently never heard of the famous comedian, and business was very light. On the last evening of the engagement, Burton was to have a benefit, and as there was no advance sale, the genial actor made up his mind that heroic measures must be taken, so he took a large bunch of tickets and left them with the bartender of the hotel at which he was staying, with a polite request that he would use his best endeavors to get rid of them. After the play was over, Burton invited several friends up to the bar, and the drink mixer gleefully informed him that he had managed to get rid of every ticket. The comedian was delighted, but as the bartender said nothing about the seventy-five cents he was presumed to have collected for each ticket, Burton grew anxious. Finally he called the bartender to one side and mentioned the matter in a whisper. The bartender looked surprised and pained, and when he recovered from his astonishment, he blurted out: "Look here, Mr. Billy Burton, none of your infernal Northern tricks here; it won't do, no way! You told me to get rid of them tickets, and as I had promised you, I had to go through with the job, and, by thunder, I was obliged to stand drinks to every man to take one!"

Notes of the Stage.

Nat Goodwin is in Frisco. He writes that his Western trip has convinced him that there is as much gold above the earth as there is underneath it.

Eugene Cowles is shortly to return to the comic opera field for a brief revival of "Robin Hood" and other operas. Mr. Cowles has been playing vaudeville with much success.

Charles Frohman has secured "The Heart of the Sparrow," the most successful comedy of recent years in Paris, where it was recently produced under the title of "Le Coeur de Moineau." He will produce it at a prominent London theater in September. With "Le Duel" and "La Belle Marseillaise," this gives Mr. Frohman the three notable hits of the Paris season.

Daniel Frohman will add Lawrence D'Orsay to his list of stars next season. He made the arrangement with the Kirke La Shelle estate by cable through Charles Frohman's New York offices. Mr. D'Orsay signed the contract before he sailed for Europe. He will appear in the new play, "The Embassy Ball," which Augustus Thomas has written for him.

E. H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe ended their tour at Wheeling, W. Va., June 23. Next season Miss Marlowe will play Portia to Sothern's Shylock. "Twelfth Night" and "Taming of the Shrew" will be in the repertoire.

Emma Calve sang Carmen before one of the largest audiences in the history of the Opera Comique last Thursday. This should set at rest the many misgivings regarding the diva's voice. She will arrive in New York some time in October to fulfill her concert engagements under the direction of John Cort and S. Kronberg. She promises a new role, something after the style of Yvette Guilbert.

Edna May is in Paris and will spend a fortnight in Switzerland. On her return to America in July she will rest on Lake Ontario before beginning rehearsals.

Between Eleanora Duse and the Henry Russell Grand Opera Company, the Shuberts have been able to present quite a remarkable series of performances in their new London house, the Waldorf. During the second week of the season no fewer than ten plays, dramatic and musical, were given matinee and evening interpretations. Duse appeared in "Hedda Gabler," "Magda," "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," and "Camille," while Bonci, Alice Nielsen, and the opera company sang "L'Amico Fritz," "La Traviata," "Don Pasquale," "Cavalleria Rusticana," "Maestro di Cappella," and "La Somnambula." The Italian actress is not scheduled to come to America next season, but Mr. Russell's organization is booked for an extended tour to begin in October at the Lyric Theater, New York.

Sidney Grundy has revised and rewritten his play, "An Old Jew," and intends to call it "After Many Days." It will be played by John Hare.

D. L. Williamson, manager of the Cairo Opera House, Cairo, Ill., has leased the exclusive rights to "Polly Primrose" from Paul Wilstach, the author, and will star Carol Neden in the name part. Miss Neden will be remembered as the Bonita in the No. 1 Arizona company. Before last season Miss Noden worked in stock with the Boyle at Nashville, the Hopkins company of Memphis, the Vendome stock company of Nashville, and the Neden company at the Lafayette Theater, this city.

"The Valkyrie" will in all probability be the most ambitious offering of Mr. Savage's English Grand Opera Company the coming season. "Rigoletto" and "Aida" are also in the repertoire.

Negotiations that have been pending for some time to bring Alfred Reisenauer, the German pianist, to this country for a series of recitals, have resulted in the closing of contracts in which the second American tour of the distinguished virtuoso will be under the direction of Loudon G. Charlton. His first concert will probably be given early in November. Reisenauer played himself into instant favor on his first American engagement almost two years ago. The echo of enthusiasm of the prominent critics is heard now.

Mary Garden has put herself into the front rank of prima donnas by her singing of the title role of Massenet's "Cherubin" in Paris. She is said to be the only foreign artist who makes no attempt to hide her native accent.

Charles Emerson Cook, whose new opera, "The Rose of the Alhambra," is to be produced next season by F. C. Whitney, with Lillian Blauvelt as the star, sailed for Spain Thursday morning on the Cretic, from New York. As the new work is Spanish in subject, Mr. Whitney has commissioned Mr. Cook to bring back all the "atmospheres" and other material that the cities of Granada and Seville can supply. It is Mr. Whitney's intention to surround Miss Blauvelt with a production that shall be, first of all, thoroughly artistic—in keeping with the brilliant talents and vivacious beauty of the star herself.

"I have heard of hard luck stories," said Jess Dandy, of "The Prince of Pilsen," "but one a stranded actor told me last summer, I believe, carries off the palm. This actor had been out with one of those barnstorming aggregations that move from town to town whenever the sheriff will let them. Salaries were long overdue, and in fact this actor acquaintance of mine hadn't been able to get laundry money since the season opened. Finally in desperation, he went to the management and demanded $25. 'Twenty-five dollars,' said the manager, 'why, if I had $25 I'd put out a number two company.'"

Andre Messager, musical director at Covent Garden Theater, London, has been engaged to come to America next fall to conduct the opening performance of "Veronique," of which he is the composer.

Bernard Shaw, who heard "Die Walkure" recently in London, makes fun of the costume worn by Brunhild, and criticises it as follows: "On top a golden wig, such as the barmaids used to wear. Then a helmet put on so as not to disturb the wig. Then armor and a breast plate—and below a long, white flowing skirt. And in this apron she is supposed to storm battlefields and rush over mountains!" A writer in the New York Globe says "that some day there will be a singing actress imaginative and bold enough to defy even Wagner in these things, cast off Brunhild's trail, slash her skirt, put armor on her legs, and not use her spear as a staff when she descends the steep to meet Wotan. Ternina has thought of it."

Melba is telling in London as the most amusing incident of her American tour the remark of a young woman who had moved social mountains to be presented to her. At last the moment came and the young woman could only stammer: "You—er you—er sing, I believe."

Covent Garden can still raise its prices for the performance of the "Ring" music dramas and yet fill every seat. The best seats nominally cost $7.50 for each performance of the two "cycles," with which the season began there, but the speculators received as much as $15 for those that they sold.

Cecil De Mille, the young actor who recently revived "Lord Chumley," evoked a remarkable comment some weeks ago from the scribe of a country newspaper. Quoth this journalist: "At the opera house last night was seen Cecil De Mille, son of the dramatist, who died several years ago, and he had a warm reception."

CALMED THE CRITIC.

"I was a member of a strolling company of players many years ago," said Dan Collyer, of the "College Widow" company, "in which one is at the end of the season rich in experience, but with little else to remember the months just passed. Business had been bad, very bad, for a week, and one night in a little Pennsylvania town we were all so demoralized that I suppose the performance was a little bit worse than usual. I was seated in the ramshackle hotel with the manager discussing the lack of appreciation all over the world of true histrionic art and the flatheadedness of the people in that particular watertank especially.

"A very pompous young fellow came up to us and said:

"'Is this Mr. Collyer?'

"I admitted the fact and he went on:

"'Well,' said he, 'I am the dramatic critic of the Umpville Bugle and I just wanted to tell you that you must be prepared for a very severe criticism in the morning, for I think your show is very bad, although personally I like you.'

"The manager quick as a flash said: 'Don't let that bother you, young man. We can walk outside of the Bugle's circulation in ten minutes.'"

DE KOVEN'S FORTUNE.

Reginald De Koven, who composed "Elysia" for De Wolf Hopper, is one of the few musicians in America whose work has made him independently wealthy. Mr. De Koven owns property both in New York and in Washington. A goodly part of his fortune was earned by "Robin Hood," which, by the way, is about to have its first performance in Paris, but he profited largely by "The Fencing Master," "The Three Dragoons," and "The Highwayman." This last opera is now being sung in Vienna. Mr. De Koven recently made a contract with the Shuberts by the terms of which they are to produce one of his works each year at the Lyric Theater, New York. "Elysia" will be offered in that house some time in September.